Hog Bridegrooms

tales of Aarne-Thompson-Uther type 441
in which a beautiful maiden
is forced to marry
a hog or a hedgehog

edited and/or translated by

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King Pig

Italy, Giovanni Francesco Straparola

> Galeotto, King of Anglia, has a son who is born in the shape of a pig. This son marries three wives, and in the end, having thrown off his semblance, becomes a handsome youth.

Fair ladies, if man were to spend a thousand years in rendering thanks to his creator for having made him in the form of a human and not of a brute beast, he could not speak gratitude enough. This reflection calls to mind the story of one who was born as a pig, but afterwards became a comely youth. Nevertheless, to his dying day he was known to the people over whom he ruled as King Pig.

You must know, dear ladies, that Galeotto, King of Anglia, was a man highly blest in worldly riches, and in his wife Ersilia, the daughter of Matthias, King of Hungary, a princess who, in virtue and beauty, outshone all the other ladies of the time. And Galeotto was a wise king, ruling his land so that no man could hear complaint against him. Though they had been several years married they had no child, wherefore they both of them were much aggrieved.

While Ersilia was walking one day in her garden she felt suddenly weary, and remarking hard by a spot covered with fresh green turf, she went up to it and sat down thereon, and, overcome with weariness and soothed by the sweet singing of the birds in the green foliage, she fell asleep.

And it chanced that while she slept there passed by three fairies who held mankind somewhat in scorn, and these, when they beheld the sleeping queen, halted, and gazing upon her beauty, took counsel together how they might protect her and throw a spell upon her.

When they were agreed, the first cried out, "I will that no man shall be able to harm her, and that, the next time she lie with her husband, she may be with child and bear a son who shall not have his equal in all the world for beauty."

Then said the second, "I will that no one shall ever have power to offend her, and that the prince who shall be born of her shall be gifted with every virtue under the sun."

And the third said, "And I will that she shall be the wisest among women, but that the son whom she shall conceive shall be born in the skin of a pig, with a pig's ways and manners, and in this state he shall be constrained to abide till he shall have three times taken a woman to wife."

As soon as the three fairies had flown away Ersilia awoke, and straightway arose and went back to the palace, taking with her the flowers she had plucked. Not many days had passed before she knew herself to be with child, and when the time of her delivery was come, she gave birth to a son with members like those of a pig and not of a human being.

When tidings of this prodigy came to the ears of the king and queen they lamented sore thereanent, and the king, bearing in mind how good and wise his queen was, often felt moved to put this offspring of hers to death and cast it into the sea, in order that she might be spared the shame of having given birth to him. But when he debated in his mind and considered that this son, let him be what he might, was of his own begetting, he put aside the cruel purpose which he had been harboring, and, seized with pity and grief, he made up his mind that the son should be brought up and nurtured like a rational being and not as a brute beast.

The child, therefore, being nursed with the greatest care, would often be brought to the queen and put his little snout and his little paws in his mother's lap, and she, moved by natural affection, would caress him by stroking his bristly back with her hand, and embracing and kissing him as if he had been of human form. Then he would wag his tail and give other signs to show that he was conscious of his mother's affection.

The pigling, when he grew older, began to talk like a human being, and to wander abroad in the city, but whenever he came near to any mud or dirt he would always wallow therein, after the manner of pigs, and return all covered with filth. Then, when he approached the king and queen, he would rub his sides against their fair garments, defiling them with all manner of dirt, but because he was indeed their own son they bore it all.

One day he came home covered with mud and filth, as was his wont, and lay down on his mother's rich robe, and said in a grunting tone, "Mother, I wish to get married."

When the queen heard this, she replied, "Do not talk so foolishly. What maid would ever take you for a husband, and think you that any noble or knight would give his daughter to one so dirty and ill-savored as you?"

But he kept on grunting that he must have a wife of one sort or another. They queen, not knowing how to manage him in this matter, asked the king what they should do in their trouble, "Our son wishes to marry, but where shall we find anyone who will take him as a husband?"

Every day the pig would come back to his mother with the same demand, "I must have a wife, and I will never leave you in peace until you procure for me a certain maiden I have seen today, who pleases me greatly."

It happened that this maiden was a daughter of a poor woman who had three daughters. When the queen heard this, she had brought before her the poor woman and her eldest daughter, and said, "Good mother, you are poor and burdened with children. If you will agree to what I shall say to you, you will be rich. I have this son who is, as you see, in form a pig, and I would fain marry him to your eldest daughter. Do not consider him, but think of the king and of me, and remember that your daughter will inherit this whole kingdom when the king and I shall be dead."

When the young girl listened to the words of the queen she was greatly disturbed in her mind and blushed red for shame, and then said that on no account would she listen to the queen's proposition; but the poor mother besought her so pressingly that at last she yielded.

When the pig came home one day, all covered with dirt as usual, his mother said to him, "My son, we have found for you the wife you desire." And then she caused to be brought in the bride, who by this time had been robed in sumptuous regal attire, and presented her to the pig prince. When he saw how lovely and desirable she was he was filled with joy, and, all foul and dirty as he was, jumped round about her, endeavoring by his pawing and nuzzling to show some sign of his affection.

But she, when she found he was soiling her beautiful dress, thrust him aside; whereupon the pig said to her, "Why do you push me thus? Have I not had these garments made for you myself?"

Then she answered disdainfully, "No, neither you nor any other of the whole kingdom of hogs has done this thing."

And when the time for going to bed was come the young girl said to herself, "What am I to do with this foul beast? This very night, while he lies in his first sleep, I will kill him."

The pig prince, who was not far off, heard these words, but said nothing, and when the two retired to their chamber he got into the bed, stinking and dirty as he was, and defiled the sumptuous bed with his filthy paws and snout. He lay down by his spouse, who was not long in falling to sleep, and then he struck her with his sharp hoofs and drove them into her breast so that he killed her.

The next morning the queen went to visit her daughter-in-law, and to her great grief found that the pig had killed her; and when he came back from wandering about the city he said, in reply to the queen's bitter reproaches, that he had only wrought with his wife as she was minded to deal with him, and then withdrew in an ill humor.

Not many days had passed before the pig prince again began to beseech the queen to allow him to marry one of the other sisters, and because the queen at first would not listen to his petition he persisted in his purpose, and threatened to ruin everything in the place if he could not have her to wife. The queen, when she heard this, went to the king and told him everything, and he made answer that perhaps it would be wiser to kill their ill-fated offspring before he might work some fatal mischief in the city.

But the queen felt all the tenderness of a mother toward him, and loved him very dearly in spite of his brutal person, and could not endure the thought of being parted from him; so she summoned once more to the palace the poor woman, together with her second daughter, and held a long discourse with her, begging her the while to give her daughter in marriage.

At last the girl assented to take the pig prince for a husband; but her fate was no happier than her sister's, for the bridegroom killed her, as he had killed his other bride, and then fled headlong from the palace.

When he came back dirty as usual and smelling so foully that no one could approach him, the king and queen censured him gravely for the outrage he had wrought; but again he cried out boldly that if he had not killed her she would have killed him.

As it had happened before, the pig in a very short time began to importune his mother again to let him have to wife the youngest sister, who was much more beautiful than either of the others; and when this request of his was refused steadily, he became more insistent than ever, and in the end began to threaten the queen's life in violent and bloodthirsty words, unless he should have given to him the young girl for his wife.

The queen, when she heard this shameful and unnatural speech, was well-nigh broken hearted and like to go out of her mind; but, putting all other considerations aside, she called for the poor woman and her third daughter, who was named Meldina, and thus addressed her, "Meldina, my child, I should be greatly pleased if you would take the pig prince for a husband; pay no regard to him, but to his father and to me; then, if you will be prudent and bear patiently with him, you may be the happiest woman in the world."

To this speech Meldina answered, with a grateful smile upon her face, that she was quite content to do as the queen bade her, and thanked her humbly for deigning to choose her as a daughter-in-law; for, seeing that she herself had nothing in the world, it was indeed great good fortune that she, a poor girl, should become the daughter-in-law of a potent sovereign.

The queen, when she heard this modest and amiable reply, could not keep back her tears for the happiness she felt; but she feared all the time that the same fate might be in store for Meldina as her sisters.

When the new bride had been clothed in rich attire and decked with jewels, and was awaiting the bridegroom, the pig prince came in, filthier and more muddy than ever; but she spread out her rich gown and besought him to lie down by her side. Whereupon the queen bade her to thrust him away, but to this she would not consent, and spoke thus to the queen, "There are three wise sayings, gracious lady, which I remember to have heard. The first is that it is folly to waste time in searching for that which cannot be found. The second is that we should believe nothing we may hear, except those things which bear the marks of sense and reason. The third is that, when once you have got possession of some rare and precious treasure, prize it well and keep a firm hold upon it."

When the maiden had finished speaking, the pig prince, who had been wide awake and had heard all that she had said, got up, kissed her on the face and neck and bosom and shoulders with his tongue, and she was not backward in returning his caresses; so that he was fired with a warm love for her.

As soon as the time for retiring for the night had come, the bride went to bed and awaited her unseemly spouse, and, as soon as he came, she raised the coverlet and bade him lie near to her and put his head upon the pillow, covering him carefully with the bedclothes and drawing the curtains so that he might feel no cold.

When morning had come the pig got up and ranged abroad to pasture, as was his wont, and very soon after the queen went to the bride's chamber, expecting to find that she had met with the same fate as her sisters; but when she saw her lying in the bed, all defiled with mud as it was, and looking pleased and contented, she thanked God for this favor, that her son had at last found a spouse according to his liking.

One day, soon after this, when the pig prince was conversing pleasantly with his wife, he said to her, "Meldina, my beloved wife, if I could be fully sure that you could keep a secret, I would now tell you one of mine; something I have kept hidden for many years. I know you to be very prudent and wise, and that you love me truly; so I wish to make you the sharer of my secret."

"You may safely tell it to me, if you will," said Meldina, "for I promise never to reveal it to anyone without your consent."

Whereupon, being now sure of his wife's discretion and fidelity, her straightway shook off from his body the foul and dirty skin of the pig, and stood revealed as a handsome and well shaped young man, and all that night rested closely folded in the arms of his beloved wife.

But he charged her solemnly to keep silence about this wonder she had seen, for the time had not yet come for his complete delivery from this misery. So when he left the bed he donned the dirty pig's hid once more. I leave you to imagine for yourselves how great was the great joy of Meldina when she discovered that, instead of a pig, she had gained a handsome and gallant young prince for a husband.

Not long after this she proved to with child, and when the time her delivery came she gave birth to a fair and shapely boy. The joy of the king and queen was unbounded, especially when they found that the newborn child had the form of a human being and not that of a beast.

But the burden of the strange and weighty secret which her husband had confided to her pressed heavily upon Meldina, and one day she went to her mother-in-law and said, "Gracious queen, when first I married your son I believed I was married to a beast, but not I find that you have given me the comeliest, the worthiest, and the most gallant young man ever born into the world to be my husband. For know that when he comes into my chamber to lie by my side, he casts off his dirty hide and leaves it on the ground, and is changed into a graceful handsome youth. No one could believe this marvel save they saw it with their own eyes."

When the queen heard these words she deemed that her daughter-in-law must be jesting with her, but Meldina still persisted that what she said was true. And when the queen demanded to know how she might witness with her own eyes the truth of this thing, Meldina replied, "Come to my chamber tonight, when we shall be in our first sleep; the door will be open, and you will find that what I tell you is the truth."

That same night, when the looked-for time had come, and all were gone to rest, the queen let some torches be kindled and went, accompanied by the king, to the chamber of her son, and when she had entered she saw the pig's skin lying on the floor in the corner of the room, and having gone to the bedside, found therein a handsome young man in whose arms Meldina was lying. And when they saw this, the delight of the king and queen was very great, and the king gave order that before anyone should leave the chamber the pig's hide should be torn to shreds. So great was their joy over the recovery of their son that they well-nigh died thereof.

And King Galeotto, when he saw that he had so fine a son, and a grandchild likewise, laid aside his diadem and his royal robes, and advanced to his place his son, whom he let be crowned with the greatest pomp, and who was ever afterwards known as King Pig. Thus, to the great contentment of all the people, the young king began his reign, and he lived long and happily with Meldina his beloved wife.

- Source: Giovanni Francesco Straparola, *The Facetious Nights*, translated by W. G. Waters (London: Privately printed for members of the Society of Bibliophiles, 1901), vol. 1, pp. 133-150 (night 2, tale 1).
- We know almost nothing about the personal life of Giovanni Francesco [also spelled Gianfrancesco] Straparola (ca. 1480 - ca. 1557). His two-volume work *Le piacevoli notti* (1550-1553), called in English *The Facetious Nights of Straparola* or simply *The Nights of Straparola*, contains some 75 novellas and fairy tales, some of oriental origin. Obviously patterning his collection after Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, Straparola depicts here thirteen nights of revelry in a luxurious villa on the island of Murano near Venice. The participants add to the entertainment by telling one another stories. Included are tales of magic and the supernatural as well as bawdy jokes and anecdotes. Straparola's work is one of Europe's earliest collections of stories based largely on folklore, and as such is an important cultural monument.
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Hans-My-Hedgehog

Germany, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm

Once upon a time there was a peasant who had money and land enough, but as rich as he was, there was still something missing from his happiness: He had no children with his wife. Often when he went to the city with the other peasants, they would mock him and ask him why he had no children. He finally became angry, and when he returned home, he said, "I will have a child, even if it is a hedgehog."

Then his wife had a baby, and the top half was a hedgehog and the bottom half a boy. When she saw the baby, she was horrified and said, "Now see what you have wished upon us!"

The man said, "It cannot be helped. The boy must be baptized, but we cannot ask anyone to be his godfather."

The woman said, "And the only name that we can give him is Hans-My-Hedgehog."

When he was baptized, the pastor said, "Because of his quills he cannot be given an ordinary bed." So they put a little straw behind the stove and laid him in it. And he could not drink from his mother, for he would have stuck her with his quills. He lay there behind the stove for eight years, and his father grew tired of him, and thought, "if only he would die." But he did not die, but just lay there.

Now it happened that there was a fair in the city, and the peasant wanted to go. He asked his wife what he should bring her.

"A little meat, some bread rolls, and things for the household," she said. Then he asked the servant girl, and she wanted a pair of slippers and some fancy stockings.

Finally, he also said, "Hans-My-Hedgehog, what would you like?"

"Father," he said, "bring me some bagpipes."

When the peasant returned home he gave his wife what he had brought for her, meat and bread rolls. Then he gave the servant girl the slippers and fancy stockings. And finally he went behind the stove and gave Hans-My-Hedgehog the bagpipes.

When Hans-My-Hedgehog had them, he said, "Father, go to the blacksmith's and have my cock-rooster shod, then I will ride away and never again come back." The father was happy to get rid of him, so he had his rooster shod, and when it was done, Hans-My-Hedgehog climbed on it and rode away. He took pigs and donkeys with him, to tend in the forest.

In the forest the rooster flew into a tall tree with him. There he sat and watched over the donkeys and the pigs. He sat there for years, until finally the herd had grown large. His father knew nothing about him. While sitting in the tree, he played his bagpipes and made beautiful music.

One day a king came by. He was lost and heard the music. He was amazed to hear it, and sent a servant to look around and see where it was coming from. He looked here and there but only saw a little animal sitting high in a tree. It looked like a rooster up there with a hedgehog sitting on it making the music.

The king said to the servant that he should ask him why he was sitting there, and if he knew the way back to his kingdom. Then Hans-My-Hedgehog climbed down from the tree and told him that he would show him the way if the king would promise in writing to give him the first thing that greeted him at the royal court upon his arrival home.

The king thought, "I can do that easily enough. Hans-My-Hedgehog cannot understand writing, and I can put down what I want to."

Then the king took pen and ink and wrote something, and after he had done so, Hans-My-Hedgehog showed him the way, and he arrived safely at home. His daughter saw him coming from afar, and was so overjoyed that she ran to meet him and kissed him. He thought about Hans-My-Hedgehog and told her what had happened, that he was supposed to have promised the first thing that greeted him to a strange animal that rode a rooster and made beautiful music. But instead he had written that this would not happen, for Hans-My-Hedgehog could not read. The princess was happy about this, and said that it was a good thing, for she would not have gone with him in any event.

Hans-My-Hedgehog tended the donkeys and pigs, was of good cheer, and sat in the tree blowing on his bagpipes.

Now it happened that another king came this way with his servants and messengers. He too got lost and did not know the way back home because the forest was so large. He too heard the beautiful music from afar, and asked one of his messengers to go and see what it was and where it was coming from. The messenger ran to the tree where he saw Hans-My-Hedgehog astride the cock-rooster. The messenger asked him what he was doing up there.

"I am tending my donkeys and pigs. What is it that you want?" replied Hans-My-Hedgehog.

The messenger said that they were lost and could not find their way back to their kingdom, and asked him if he could not show them the way.

Then Hans-My-Hedgehog climbed down from the tree with his rooster and told the old king that he would show him the way if he would give him the thing that he first met at home before the royal castle.

The king said yes and signed a promise to Hans-My-Hedgehog.

When that was done, Hans-My-Hedgehog rode ahead on his rooster showing them the way, and the king safely reached his kingdom. When the king arrived at his court there was great joy. Now he had an only daughter who was very beautiful. She ran out to him, threw her arms around his neck and kissed him, and was ever so happy that her old father had returned.

She asked him where he had been during his long absence, and he told her how he had lost his way and almost not made it home again, but that as he was making his way through a great forest he had come upon a half hedgehog, half human astride a rooster sitting in a tall tree and making beautiful music who had shown him the way, but whom he had promised whatever first met him at the royal court, and it was she herself, and he was terribly sorry.

But she promised that she would go with him when he came, for the love of her old father.

Hans-My-Hedgehog tended his pigs, and the pigs had more pigs, until there were so many that the whole forest was full. Then Hans-My-Hedgehog let his father know that they should empty out all the stalls in the village, because he was coming with such a large herd of pigs that everyone who wanted to would be able to take part in the slaughter.

It saddened the father to hear this, for he thought that Hans-My-Hedgehog had long since died. But Hans-My-Hedgehog mounted his cock-rooster, drove the pigs ahead of himself into the village, and had them butchered. What a slaughter! What a commotion! They could hear the noise two hours away!

Afterward Hans-My-Hedgehog said, "Father, have my cock-rooster shod a second time at the blacksmith's. Then I will ride away and not come back again as long as I live." So the father had the cock-rooster shod, and was happy that Hans-My-Hedgehog was not coming back.

Hans-My-Hedgehog rode into the first kingdom. The king had ordered that if anyone should approach who was carrying bagpipes and riding on a rooster, that he should be shot at, struck down, and stabbed, to prevent him from entering the castle. Thus when Hans-My-Hedgehog rode up, they attacked him with bayonets, but he spurred his rooster on, flew over the gate and up to the king's window. Landing there, he shouted to him, to give him what he had promised, or it would cost him and his daughter their lives.

Then the king told the princess to go out to him, in order to save his life and her own as well. She put on a white dress, and her father gave her a carriage with six horses, magnificent servants, money, and property. She climbed aboard and Hans-My-Hedgehog took his place beside her with his rooster and bagpipes. They said farewell and drove off.

The king thought that he would never see them again. However, it did not go as he thought it would, for when they had traveled a short distance from the city, Hans-My-Hedgehog pulled off her beautiful clothes and stuck her with his quills until she was bloody all over. "This is the reward for your deceit. Go away. I do not want you." With that he sent her back home, and she was cursed as long as she lived.

Hans-My-Hedgehog, astride his cock-rooster and carrying his bagpipes, rode on to the second kingdom where he had also helped the king find his way. This one, in contrast, had ordered that if anyone looking like Hans-My-Hedgehog should arrive, he should be saluted and brought to the royal castle with honors and with a military escort.

When the princess saw him she was horrified, because he looked so strange, but she thought that nothing could be done about it, because she had promised her father to go with him. She welcomed Hans-My-Hedgehog, and they were married. Then he was taken to the royal table, and she sat next to him while they ate and drank.

That evening when it was time to go to bed, she was afraid of his quills, but he told her to have no fear, for he would not hurt her. He told the old king to have four men keep watch by their bedroom door. They should make a large fire. He said that he would take off his hedgehog skin after going into the bedroom, and before getting into bed. The men should immediately pick it up and throw it into the fire, and then stay there until it was completely consumed by the fire.

When the clock struck eleven, he went into the bedroom, took off the hedgehog skin, and laid it down by the bed. The men rushed in, grabbed it, and threw it into the fire, and as soon as the fire consumed it, he was redeemed, and he lay there in bed entirely in the shape of a human. But he was as black as coal, as though he had been charred. The king sent for his physician, who washed him with good salves and balms. Then he became white and was a handsome young gentleman.

When the princess saw what had happened, she was overjoyed, and they got up and ate and drank. Now their wedding was celebrated for real, and Hans-My-Hedgehog inherited the old king's kingdom.

Some years later he traveled with his wife to his father, and said that he was his son. But the father said that he did not have a son. He had had one, but he had been born with quills like a hedgehog and had gone off into the world. Then he said that he was the one, and the old father rejoiced and returned with him to his kingdom.

My tale is done,
And has gone
To Gustchen's home.

- Source: Hans mein Igel, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Children's and Household Tales -- Grimms' Fairy Tales), no. 108.
- The Grimms' source: Dorothea Viehmann (1755-1815). The Grimms first published this tale in 1815 in volume 2 (no. 22) of their *Kinder- und Hausmärchen.* From the second edition onward it was given number 108.
- Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 2000.
- Type 441.
- The Grimms made only a few revisions (mostly stylistic) to this tale between the first and the last editions. Two changes worth noting are:
    1. In the first and second editions, before punishing the first princess by pricking her with his quills, "he undressed her." In the final (7th) edition, "he pulled off her clothes." Because I do not have access to editions 3-6, I cannot ascertain exactly when this change was made.
    2. In the first edition, Hans-My-Hedgehog goes to bed with the second princess before there is any mention of marriage. In the second and following editions, the Grimms added the phrase "and they were married" before sending the couple off to bed.
- Link to a file containing only the Grimms' Hans-My-Hedgehog.
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The Wild Pig

Germany, J. W. Wolf

Once upon a time there was a king. His wife bore him only one son, and he had not much pleasure with him, for a wicked witch had transformed him into a wild pig. The king and queen were very sad about this, but because things that have happened cannot be changed, they finally came to terms with the situation. They allowed the wild pig to run about the courtyard and the palace garden, where he behaved himself very well and did no one any harm.

Not far from the king's castle there was another castle where a rich lord lived who had three daughters, each one more beautiful than the others. One day the wild pig ran off further than usual and saw the oldest daughter as she was picking flowers in a field. She pleased him so much that he fell head over heels in love with her, and with all his might he wanted to marry her.

The king tried to convince him, that this would not be possible, but to no avail. The wild pig would hear none of this, saying further that if she would not become his wife then he would die of grief. So the king sent someone to the lord of the castle and informed him how things stood. At first the lord was not very pleased with the proposal, but after considering that the prince would otherwise die, he gave his consent. However, the daughter did not approve and said -- to the contrary -- that she would rather do God-knows-what than to have a disgusting pig for a husband. But that did not help her, and over her objections, the king forced her to accept, and the wedding was celebrated with the greatest pomp in the world.

When it got late, and everyone was going to bed, the bride too lay herself down to sleep. The wild pig wanted to lie next to her, but when he jumped into bed, he unfortunately struck her on the neck with his heavy feet, and -- she was dead. No pen can describe how sad were the wild pig and the king and the parents of the bride.

One year later the wild pig ran astray once again and found the rich lord's second daughter in the field. She pleased him so much that he wanted to marry her, whatever it might cost. The king made many excuses, but it was like throwing oil into the fire, and in the end there was nothing left to do but to talk with the lord about it. He did not want to hear anything about it, and he opposed the marriage with all his power, saying that he had not raised his daughters for pigs and the like.

The king reported this to his son, who insisted even more fervently than before. Thus the king had to force the parents to marry off their daughter. With tears and crying the bride was taken from her castle and dragged to the wedding. It was a sad affair, as though each of the guests could foresee that the second bride would fare no better than had the first one. And that is exactly what happened, because when the bridegroom wanted to jump into bed, he hit her on the neck with his plump feet, and -- she was dead.

The sorrow cannot be described that ruled in the king's castle as well as in the other castle. The wild pig was beside himself because of what had happened, and he struck his head against the walls as if he were tired of living. The bride's parents could not be consoled. Of three daughters, they now had only one, who was still a tender young girl, and they were afraid of losing her as they had the others. Thus they wanted to pack their belongings and move to a foreign country. When the king heard this, he became even sadder than before, and even angrier with his son. He asked the rich lord to remain in his castle and promised him that he would drive away the wild pig immediately.

And he kept this promise. The poor prince was driven out of the castle without pity or compassion, and he ran into a nearby forest.

The rich lord's third daughter was a beautiful girl, and because she was as good as an angel, her parents no longer thought about the terrible way they had lost their other daughters.

One day everyone left castle to go walking in the woods. The girl liked the beautiful wildflowers so much that she could not pick enough of them, and the birds sang so beautifully that she could not hear them enough. She picked and picked, and listened and listened. Thus she fell further behind the others until she was finally all by herself. While she sat there picking flowers, a wild pig suddenly ran up to her, took her on his back, and ran away with her.

Her father and mother called and called, and the other people looked everywhere, but the girl could not be found, and that evening they had to return to the castle without the poor girl.

The wild pig did not eat her up, but instead carried her a long way off to a deep cave, where no person would dare to enter. He set the girl down quietly and gently and made a bed for her from soft moss. He ran back into the woods and returned with flowers and strawberries. In short, he did everything he could to please the girl, as far as he could tell from her eyes.

Now I don't have to tell you that the wild pig was none other than the enchanted prince. The girl felt more and more at ease, and finally she began to stroke the wild pig's coarse bristly head with her hands. He licked her hands and was so happy that tears ran from his eyes.

"Why are you crying?" asked the girl.

"Why should I not cry?" said the wild pig. "You could redeem me, but I know that you will not do so."

This saddened the girl, and she herself began to cry, saying, "Oh yes, I want to redeem you, wild pig, just tell me what I have to do."

The pig answered, "And what if I tell you, and you still don't do it? But I will tell you: You must take me as your husband, and marry me, and be my wife."

With that the girl laughed and jumped up and said, "If that is all I have to do, then I will redeem you."

When the wild pig heard this he jumped up three times with joy. Then he ran off and brought back enough soft green moss to make a bed in which they could comfortably sleep together.

That night the girl had an unusual dream. She thought that someone told her to get up early the next morning and take the large pelt that she would find next to the bed. Then she should leave the cave, close it off with a stone, and on this stone burn the pelt to ashes. This seemed very strange to her.

At the day's first dawning she looked out of the bed and did indeed see a large pelt, like one from a wild pig, lying there. The girl took courage, went to the cave's entrance, and with all the power she could muster rolled a heavy stone that lay nearby to the entrance. Then she made a large fire, and as soon as it was burning well, she threw the pelt into it. It had scarcely begun to burn when a pitiful crying and moaning sounded from within the cave. The girl would have liked to open the cave, but the stone had become too hot, and she would have burned her hands terribly on it. After the fire was out and the stone had cooled off a little, she shoved the stone aside, as best she could. The most handsome prince that one can imagine stood before her. He threw his arms around her neck and cried, "Now do you see that you have redeemed me? You are mine and I am yours, and if your two sisters had been as willing as you, then they would not be dead!"

The prince left the cave with the girl and went to the king's castle and explained everything to him and to the queen. The girl's parents were summoned from the other castle, and he explained everything to them. Three days later they held the wedding with great pomp and ceremony, and one has never seen a more handsome bridegroom than the prince or a more beautiful bride than the girl.

Not long afterward the old king died. The prince came to the throne, and the girl became his queen, and if they have not stood up from throne, then they are still seated upon it.

- Source: J. W. Wolf, "Das wilde Schwein," *Deutsche Märchen und Sagen* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1845), no. 3, pp. 16-21.
- Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 1998.
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The Hedgehog That Married the King's Daughter

Lithuania

Once upon a time there was a man who had no children. One day he went into the woods and found a hedgehog, which he took home with him.

One day the hedgehog said to him, "I want to drive our sow out into the woods and tend her."

The old man replied, "What! You can do that? You hardly do anything here!"

However, the hedgehog did drive the sow into the woods and tended her there for three years without returning home. The sow had piglets, and the piglets in turn had more piglets until finally there was a great herd of pigs.

Once an officer came into the woods hunting, and he lost his way. Seeing the pigs, he wanted to know where the swineherd was.

He saw the hedgehog lying under a fir tree and asked him, "Where is the swineherd who is looking after these pigs?"

The hedgehog answered, "I am the swineherd for these pigs."

"Where must I go to get out of these woods?"

"If you will give me your daughter, I will lead you out of the woods."

"Show me the way, and you can have my daughter," said the officer, and the hedgehog led him out of the woods and then returned to his pigs.

Another time a prince came into the woods while hunting, and he too lost his way. He saw the pigs and wanted to find the swineherd.

Seeing the hedgehog, who again was lying under the fir tree, he asked, "Where is the swineherd who is tending these pigs?"

"I am the swineherd for these pigs," answered the hedgehog.

The prince asked, "Can you show me the way out of these woods?"

He answered, "If you will give me your daughter then I will lead you out of the woods."

"Good," said the prince. "I will give you my daughter if only you will lead me out of the woods.

The hedgehog led him out of the woods, then let him continue on his way by himself.

The next day the king himself came into the woods hunting, and he too -- like the officer and the prince -- lost his way. He saw the pigs and wanted to find the swineherd.

Seeing the hedgehog lying beneath the fir tree, he asked, "Could you show me the way out of these woods?"

"I can do that," answered the hedgehog, "If you will give me your daughter."

The king said, "Good, you can have her. Just lead me out of these woods."

So the hedgehog led him out of the woods and then returned to his pigs.

Soon afterward he drove the pigs home, and the old man saw how large the herd had become. The stall, into which they wanted to drive them, was not nearly large enough, so they had to drive them into another stall. The old man was pleased that the hedgehog had brought so many pigs back to him.

Now the hedgehog said to the old man, "Feed the rooster there. I want to ride to my girl."

The old man did this, and the hedgehog rode on the rooster to the officer.

He said to him, "Well, now give me your daughter."

The officer asked him, "What do you need for a dowry?"

"A team of horses, a coach, and the coach must be filled with gold."

The officer put the gold into the coach, the horses were harnessed, and they set the girl on top of the gold. And thus the hedgehog drove off with her.

Underway he said his girl, "You can return to your father if you want to, or you can come with me."

The girl said, "I'd sooner go back home to my father," and she went back home to him.

But the hedgehog drove to his own house with his gold.

The next day the hedgehog rode on his rooster to the prince. And the same thing happened with the second bride as with the first one. On the third day he rode to the third bride.

Approaching the king, he said, "Well, now give me your daughter for my wife."

The king gave him everything that he demanded. This time the hedgehog did not ask the king's daughter if she wanted to return to her father, but instead took her to his home where they were married.

The old man then purchased a noble estate with many fields, and with many horses and oxen. He hired maids and farmhands, and had all the fields cultivated. From now on he lived like a lord.

The hedgehog and the king's daughter stayed with the old man, and they lived together happily and royally for many years, and then they died.

- Source (books.google.com): A. Leskien and A. Brugman, "Vom Igel, der die Königstochter zur Frau bekam," *Litauische Volkslieder und Märchen* (Strassburg: Verlag von Karl J. Trübner, 1882), pp. 355-57.
- Source (books.google.com): A. Leskien and A. Brugman, "Vom Igel, der die Königstochter zur Frau bekam," *Litauische Volkslieder und Märchen* (Strassburg: Verlag von Karl J. Trübner, 1882), pp. 355-57.
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Prince Hedgehog

Russia

Once upon a time there was an emperor and an empress who for many years had been childless. One day the empress wished for a son, were he no bigger than a hedgehog.

The proverb says, "What one wishes for, that one gets," and so it was with her, for she shortly gave birth to a son who looked exactly like a hedgehog and was covered all over with sharp spines.

Far and wide the news was spread abroad through the world, and the parents were much ashamed of such a son. Nevertheless, they had him educated in all useful knowledge, and he had so clever a head that by the time he was fourteen he knew all knowledge through and through.

By this time his parents could no longer endure him near them, and they assigned to him a great forest as a place of abode, feeling certain that he would then fall a prey to a wolf or a fox or some sort of a beast. They strictly commanded him not to return before the expiration of seven years. They gave him permission, however, to take with him anything that he especially cared for; but he would take nothing with him except a sow and a great cock upon which he was wont to ride. With these he went away into the forest.

Year out, year in, Prince Hedgehog remained in the forest, and he raised so many swine that at last they were too many for even him to count.

Finally he thought to himself, "My seven years are up; I will go back home."

So he quickly gathered his swine together and drove them to the city of his parents.

When they perceived afar off the immense drove of swine, they thought, "Here comes a wealthy swine-drover."

But soon they recognized their son, who was riding upon his cock behind the swine and making straight for the imperial castle. So they received him into the castle and showed him the best of hospitality, dividing his swine among different pens, for they filled every swine-pen in the city.

While they were at table they asked their son how he enjoyed himself in the forest, and said that if he wished to go back there they would give him a goat this time. But he declared that he was not going back, for he had made up his mind to marry.

The astonished parents replied, "Why, what maiden would love you and take you for a husband?"

The poor youth knew no answer to this question, so he mounted his cock and rode away. Now the parents thought he would never come back again. But he was a clever fellow, and he went as a suitor to the king of a neighboring country who had three unmarried daughters. When he found himself near the city the cock flew up with him to the window of the room in which the company were assembled enjoying themselves. The cock crowed with all his might, until the chamberlain went to the window and asked what he wanted.

The hedgehog answered, " I come a-wooing."

Then the king permitted him to come into the room, and offered him the welcome-cup, according to ancient manner and custom.

Then the king again asked him what business brought him, and Hedgehog, the imperial prince, answered him shortly and to the point, "I come a-wooing."

The king immediately assured him that he had only to choose one of the three unmarried daughters. The Hedgehog chose the youngest, but she would not have him for a husband until her father threatened to have her shot unless she gave a cheerful consent.

She saw no help for it, and thought to herself, "I can never get out of this scrape; come what may, I'll take him. We have gold and treasure in abundance, and we shall easily get along through life."

When the hedgehog had received her consent he went back to his parents and told them what had happened to him. His parents would not believe him, and sent the chamberlain to inquire if it was true that the emperor's son, the hedgehog, was to marry the king's daughter.

When the chamberlain returned and told the emperor that his son had spoken the truth, the emperor ordered his horses to be harnessed, and went with his wife to visit the king, riding in their carriage, while their son rode behind on his cock.

When they arrived they found everything ready for the wedding. But, according to custom, the bridal party were obliged to go to the church a few days before the marriage to pray and confess to the priest.

When the young lady came to confession she asked the priest how she might manage to get rid of the prince and not be obliged to marry him.

The priest gave her a sound scolding, and said in conclusion, "Just keep quiet and all will end well. Mark what I say, and remember it well. When you are come into the church and are taking your place in the sacristy, do you follow close behind the others. When you get to the high altar sprinkle your bridegroom thrice with holy- water, and be careful to prick yourself each time with one of his spines. Then three drops of blood will trickle out of your hand, and you must let these also fall upon him."

After confession the bridal pair went home to breakfast. The next day -- it was a Sunday -- the bridal party went at half past eleven into the church, and the bride did in every respect as the priest had counselled. And, behold, the hedgehog was transformed into a beautiful youth whose like was not to be found in all the world. Then the bridal party sat down upon the benches and heard mass, and the priest united them and preached them a sermon how they should cleave to each other all their lives long.

After that they went back to the house, and the wedding feast lasted until late in the night. The wine was very good. I sat at the head of the last table, drank yellow wine out of a painted cup and ate half a swine all by myself.

- Source: Louise Seymour Houghton, *The Russian Grandmother's Wonder Tales* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), pp. 205-211.
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The Hedgehog, the Merchant, the King, and the Poor Man

Hungary

Where there was, where there was not, it is enough that there was once a merchant, there were also a king, and a poor man.

One day the merchant went out to hunt, and he traveled and journeyed till, oh! my lord's son, he found himself in such a thick forest that he saw neither the sky nor the earth; he just groped around like a blind man. Here, 'pon my soul! whether the merchant tried to free himself by turning to the left or the right, he only went into a thicker place.

When he was there five days, in hunger and thirst, stumbling about in the great wild wood without liberation, the merchant called out, "Oh, my God, if anyone would take me out of this great wild thicket to the right road, I would give him the best of my three daughters, and as a wedding gift three sacks of coin."

"I'll lead thee out right away," said someone before him.

The merchant looked to the right, to the left, but not a soul did he see.

"Don't look around," said the certain one again. "Look under thy feet."

The merchant then looked in front and saw that near his feet was a little hedgehog, and to him he directed then his word and speech.

"Well, if thou wilt lead me out, I will give thee my best daughter and three sacks of coin; the first will be gold, the second silver, and the third copper."

The hedgehog went on ahead, the merchant walked after. Soon they came out of the great wild wood. Then the hedgehog went back, and the merchant turned his wagon-tongue homeward.

Now the king went to hunt, and went in the same way as the merchant; and he too was lost in the great wild wood. The king went to the right and the left, tried in every way to free himself; all he gained was that he came to a thicker and a darker place. He too stumbled around five days in the thick wood, without food or drink.

On the sixth morning the king cried out, "Oh, my God! If any one would free me from this dense wood, even if a worm, I would give him the most beautiful of my daughters, and as a wedding gift three coaches full of coin."

"I'll lead thee out right away," said someone near him. The king looked to the right, to the left, but saw not a soul.

"Why stare around? Look at thy feet; here I am."

The king then looked at his feet and saw a little hedgehog stretched out, and said to him, " Well, hedgehog, if thou wilt lead me forth, I'll give thee the fairest of my daughters and three coaches full of coin: the first gold, the second silver, the third copper."

The hedgehog went ahead, the king followed, and in this way they soon came out of the great wild wood. The hedgehog went back to his own place; the king reached home in safety.

Then well, a poor man went out for dry branches. He went like the merchant and king, and he got astray, so that he wandered dry and hungry for five days in the great wild wood; and whether he turned to the right or the left he gained only this, that he went deeper into the denseness.

"My God," cried the poor man at last, "send me a liberator! If he would lead me out of this place, as I have neither gold nor silver, I would take him as a son, and care for him as my own child."

"Well, my lord father, I'll lead thee out; only follow."

"Where art thou, dear son?"

"Here, under thy feet; only look this way, my lord father."

The poor man looked near his feet, and saw a little hedgehog stretched out.

"Well, my dear son, lead me out and I'll keep my promise."

The hedgehog went ahead, the poor man followed, and soon they came out of the great wild wood. The hedgehog then went back to his own place, and the poor man strolled home. Well, things remained thus till once after bedtime there was a knocking at the poor man's door.

"My lord father, rise up, open the door."

The poor man, who was lying on the stove, heard only that some one was knocking at the door.

"My lord father, rise up, open the door."

The poor man heard, and heard that some one was knocking and as he thought calling out, "My lord father, rise up, open the door." But in his world life he had never had a son. The third time he heard clearly, "My lord father, rise up, open the door."

The poor man did not take this as a joke. He rose up and opened the door. My lord's son, who came in to him? No one else than the little hedgehog.

"God give a good evening to my lord father and to my mother as well," said the hedgehog.

"God receive thee, my dear son. Hast thou come then?"

"I have indeed, as thou seest, my lord father; but I am very tired, therefore wake up my mother and let her make a bed for me in my chamber."

What was the poor man to do? He woke up his wife; she made a towering bed, and the hedgehog lay in it. In the morning the poor man and his wife sat down to breakfast. They did not wish to forget their adopted son, but gave him food on a wooden plate under a bench by the fire. The hedgehog did not touch it.

"Well, my son," asked the poor man, "why not eat?"

"I do not eat, my lord father, because it is not proper to treat an adopted son like some orphan or another; therefore it beseems me not to eat all alone from a wooden plate under a bench at the fire. Seat me nicely at the table by thy side, put a tin plate before me, and place my food on it."

What was the poor man to do? He seated the hedgehog at his side, put a tin plate before him, and measured out food on it; then the hedgehog ate with his father and mother.

When they had finished breakfast the hedgehog spoke thuswise, "Well, my lord father, hast thou a couple of thalers?"

"I have."

"I suppose thou art keeping them to buy salt and wood with?"

"Yes, my son."

"I speak not of that, I am speaking of this: lend me the money; I will return it a thousand-fold. Set not thy mind much on salt and wood now; but go, my lord father, to the market. In such and such a place an old woman has a black cock for sale; buy him of her. If she asks a small price, give her double; for that will be my steed. When thou hast bought the cock for two prices, in such and such a place is a saddler; go to him. In a corner of his shop is a castaway, thrown-away, ragged, torn saddle; buy that for me, but give him two prices also. If he asks little, give him double."

The poor man put on his coat, put the two thalers in his pocket, went to the market, bought the black cock and the cast-away, thrown-away saddle for two prices; each one for two small bits of money. The hedgehog then saddled the black cock with the cast-away, thrown-away saddle, sat upon him, and went to the court of the rich merchant whom he had led out of the great wild wood.

He knocked at the door and called, "Hei, father-in-law, open the gate, let me in!"

The rich merchant opened the gate in great wonder. Who was coming? No one other than our hedgehog, riding on a black cock.

"Hear me, rich merchant," began the hedgehog; "knowest thou thy promise? When I led thee out of the great wild wood, dost remember thy promise to give me the best of thy three daughters and three sacks of coin? Now I have come for the maid and the money."

What could the rich merchant do? He called his three daughters into the white chamber, and turned to the hedgehog, saying, "Well, choose among the three the one who pleases thy eye, thy mouth, and thy heart."

The hedgehog chose the second daughter, for she was the most beautiful of the three. The merchant then measured out three sacks of coin. In the first, as he had said, there was gold, in the second silver, in the third copper; then he put his daughter and the three sacks of coin in a coach, to which four horses were attached, and he sent on her way his most beautiful daughter, with the hedgehog. They traveled and journeyed till the hedgehog, who was riding at the side of the coach on his black cock, came up, looked in through the window, and saw that the bride was in tears.

"Why dost thou cry, why dost thou weep, my heart's beautiful love?" asked the hedgehog of the maiden.

"Why should I not cry, why should I not weep, when God has punished me with such a nasty thing as thee? For I know not whether thou art a man or a beast."

"If this is thy only trouble, my heart's beautiful love, we can easily cure it; I'll keep the three sacks of coin for myself, and thee I'll send back to thy father, for I see that of me thou art not worthy."

Thus was it settled; the hedgehog kept the three sacks of coin, but the merchant's daughter he sent back to her father. The hedgehog then took the coin to the poor man, who became so rich that I think another could not be found like him in seven villages.

Now the hedgehog plucked up courage, saddled his black cock, sat on him, and rode away to the king, stood before him, and spoke in this fashion, "Dost thou remember, king, that when I brought thee out of the great wild wood, thou didst promise that if I would show the right road thou wouldst give me the most beautiful of thy three daughters and fill for me three coaches, the first with gold, the second with silver, and the third with copper coin? I am here so that thou mayest keep thy word."

The king called his three daughters to the white chamber and said, "I made a promise, and this is it: to give one of my three daughters to this hedgehog as wife. I promised because the hedgehog led me out of a great wild wood, in which I wandered for five days without food or drink, and he saved me from certain death. Therefore say, my dear daughters, which of you will agree to marry the hedgehog."

The eldest daughter turned away, the second turned away also; but the youngest and fairest spoke thus, "If thou, my father the king, hast made such a promise, I will marry him. Let the will of God be done if he has appointed such a husband for me."

"Thou art my dearest and best daughter," said the king; and he kissed her again and again.

Then the king measured out three coaches of coin, seated the princess in a chariot of gold and glass and started her on her journey, amid bitter tear-shedding, with the hedgehog, who rode at the side of the chariot on his black cock. They traveled and journeyed across forty-nine kingdoms till the hedgehog rode up to the chariot, opened the window, looked in, and saw that the princess was not weeping, but was in the best cheerful humor.

"Oh, my heart's beautiful love," said the princess, "why art thou riding on that black cock? Better come here and sit at my side on the velvet cushion."

"Thou art not afraid of me?"

"I am not afraid."

"Thou art not disgusted with me? "

"No; if God has given thee to me, then thou shouldst be mine."

"Thou art my only and most beloved wife!" said the hedgehog; and with that he shook himself, and straightway turned into such a pearl-given, charming, twenty-four-years-old king's son that tongue could not tell: golden-haired, golden-mouthed, golden-toothed. And the black cock shook himself three times, and became such a golden-haired magic steed that his equal would have to be sought for; the castaway, thrown-away saddle became golden; everything on it was gold to the last buckle.

The king's son then picked out the most beautiful place in the kingdom; standing in the middle of this he thought once, and suddenly that instant there stood before him a copper-roofed marble palace, turning on a cock's foot, and in it every kind of the most varied and beautiful golden furniture. Everything and everything was of gold, beginning with the mirror frame and ending with the cooking spoon. The king's son conducted the beautiful golden bird -- the fair princess -- into the pearl-given palace, where, like birds in a nest, they lived in quiet harmony.

When the merchant's three daughters and the two elder princesses heard of the happiness of the youngest princess, -- how well she had married, -- in their sorrow one of them jumped into a well, another drowned herself in a hemp-pond, and a third was drawn dead out of the river Tisza (Theiss). In this way four of the maidens came to an evil end; but the second daughter of the merchant gritted her teeth venomously at the princess, and made a firm and merciless resolve that she would embitter her life's happiness.

She went therefore to the palace, and found service in the guise of an old woman. She, the devil-given, came at a critical time; for the Burkus [Prussian] king had declared war against the king's son, and the princess, while her husband was in the field, was left to the care of the merchant's daughter, disguised as an old woman. Milk might as well be confided to a cat as the princess to that cockroach of the underground kingdom.

While the king's son was gone, the Lord gave the princess two beautiful children. The old woman packed them into a basket, put them under a tree in the woods, then ran back to the princess, who, recovering from a faint into which she had fallen, asked the old woman to give her the children so that she might embrace and kiss them.

"High queen," answered the old woman, "what is the use in delay or denial? They were two untimely, hairy monsters, and to save thee from terror at sight of them, I threw both into the river."

The two children slept quietly under the tree till a white deer burst with great noise through the thicket, went straight as if sent, and taking the basket hung it on his antlers; then the white deer disappeared in the forest, went on till he came to the bank of a stream, where he called three times. The Forest Maiden appeared as if by magic, took the basket with great delight, and ran panting into her own palace. The two children were seven years with the Forest Maiden, who reared them as carefully as if they had been her own.

Here, 'pon my soul, what came of the affair, or what did not, the Forest Maiden once sent the little girl with a green jug for water, and enjoined on her rigorously to be careful not to break the jug. The little girl did not let this be said twice; she was obedient and attentive. She took the jug, and was at the well in a moment. When she came, she saw a little golden bird flying around the well. Being a child, she wanted to catch the golden bird, therefore ran around with the jug in her hand till at last she saw that only the handle was left. The little girl, terrified, burst into tears, sat at the edge of the well, and cried there.

The Forest Maiden waited and waited; but she could not wait longer, therefore she sent the little brother with a second jug, and told him sternly to be careful not to break the jug. The little brother went in the same way, for he also, like children of that age, barely saw the golden bird when he wanted to strike it with the jug, which he whirled around till only the handle remained in his hand; then he burst into tears, sat by his sister, and there the two were crying at the edge of the well.

Here, 'pon my soul, the golden bird pitied the children, and asked, "Why do ye cry? Why do ye weep, pretty children?"

"Oh, pretty bird," answered the boy, who had more sense than his sister, "why should we not cry? Why should we not weep? We shall be flogged for breaking the green jugs; our dear mother will whip us."

"Oh, my children, she is not your own mother! She is only your foster mother. Your father and mother live far from here, beyond those green mountains; so if ye will follow, I'll lead you home."

The two children wanted nothing else. They went back no more to their foster mother, for they would be flogged; but they followed the golden bird, which went always before them. And they traveled and journeyed till once in a forest they came upon a great heap of gold; near the gold was a number of dice, as if some one had been playing there. The little boy and girl each took a handful of gold, and went farther. They traveled and journeyed till they came to an inn; since they were wearied, and it was evening, they went in to ask lodging.

In the inn three lords were playing dice; the two children at first merely noticed that they were playing. At last the boy took from his pocket the handful of gold, and began to play in such fashion that he won all the money of the three lords, and then one of them spoke thuswise, "Well, my dear son, I see that thou hast good luck. I have in a certain place a charming flower garden; in the middle of the garden is a marble palace, and the palace has this peculiarity: if it is struck on the side three times with this golden rod, it will turn into a golden apple; and thou mayest put down the marble palace and the flower garden in any part of the world if thou wilt strike the golden apple with the small end of the golden rod. I will bet now this flower garden and this marble palace. If thou canst win, they'll be thine."

The little boy agreed; and he won fortunately the flower garden and the marble palace. The other then gave him the golden rod, and showed him where the garden and the palace were. Next morning the children sought out the garden and the palace, which the boy struck three times on the side, and it turned to a golden apple; he put the apple in his pocket, and strolled on homeward. The little golden bird flew always ahead of them.

They traveled and journeyed till one time the golden bird stopped and said, "Well, dear children, now we are at home; put down the golden apple on this spot and strike it three times with the rod, and ye will see what a beautiful marble palace and flowery garden there will be, speaking to the seven kingdoms. The report of the palace and garden will circulate immediately, and the king himself will come to look at them. Him ye must honor as your father, for thou my little boy art the king's son, and thou my little girl the king's daughter. Dear children, here in a golden frame is a picture which gives your arms and name. Hang in the palace this picture, in the best place; but lest it be seen, cover it with velvet, and show it to no man save your own father. When he asks what that picture is, draw the velvet from it, and the rest will follow."

So it happened; the two children hung up the picture in the best room of the marble palace, and covered it with velvet. Now, the report ran to distant parts of the kingdom that there was a charming and wonderful marble palace in such and such a place, and people hastened from the seventh province distant to look at it; so that the report came to the ears of the king himself.

The king decided straightway to look at the flowery garden and marble palace; but he had hardly conceived the idea when the old woman gave him a drug. The king fell ill, and could not see the flowery garden and marble palace; and then the old woman, without invitation, stood before the king and said, "High king, if thou art so curious to see this flowery garden and marble palace, then I will go and see if they are as beautiful as report says, and tell the story to thy Highness."

The king in one way or another agreed, and the old woman went, not to see the garden, but to bring the two children to evil destruction; the wicked creature tried but succeeded not, for her weapons broke. Not to confound one word with another, I will tell the whole tale in order and accuracy.

The old witch had barely reached the famous flower garden when the two children hurried before her and showed everything from root to top, and the old piece of leather began to talk thus, "It is true that the garden is beautiful, but it would be seven times more beautiful if ye would bring the world-sounding tree."

"What must be done to get that? " asked the little boy.

"Not other than this," answered the old skeleton, "In such and such a place, in an enchanted palace, is the world-sounding tree; but ye must go for it and bring it."

With that the old witch took farewell of the two children, and strolled home; but the boy had no peace from that hour. He wanted to go and bring the world-sounding tree; therefore taking farewell of his sister with bitter tear-shedding he set out for the tree. He was going and traveling across forty-nine kingdoms till he came to a dark castle; this was the first enchanted castle. A big, lame, hairy devil stood there on guard with a fearful whip, so that no man might enter.

The hairy devil shouted very angrily at our boy, "Stop! Who is there?"

"I," answered the little boy.

"Who is I? Art thou Yanoshka? " asked the devil.

"I am."

"What journey art thou on?"

"I am looking for the world-beautifully sounding tree. Hast thou not heard of it, my lord elder brother?"

"I have not heard of it; but in such and such a place my brother stands guard, and if he has not heard of it, then no one in the world has."

Yanoshka went forward on the right road in search of the world-sounding tree. He traveled and journeyed till he came to another enchanted dark castle; there a big, lame, hairy devil was standing on guard who shouted to our Yanoshka in great anger. Our Yanoshka was much braver now, for he knew he had nothing to fear.

"Who is it?" called out the devil.

"I."

"Art thou Yanoshka?"

"I am, at the service of my lord elder brother."

"Why art thou journeying here in this strange land, where even a bird does not go?"

"I am looking for the world-beautifully sounding tree. Hast thou not heard of it, my lord elder brother?"

"What is the use in delay or denial? I have not heard; but in such and such a place my eldest brother is on guard, and if he knows nothing of it, then no one in the world knows."

With this Yanoshka moved on towards the third enchanted castle; when he came, there was a big, lame, hairy devil on guard, who called out in great anger to Yanoshka, "Who is that?"

"I."

"Thou art Yanoshka?"

"I am."

"Why art thou journeying here in this strange land, where even a bird does not go?"

"I am looking for the world-beautifully sounding tree. Hast thou not heard of it, my lord elder brother?"

"Ho, ho, Yanoshka! of course I have; it is here in the garden of this enchanted palace. Thou mayest take it, but only if thou obey my words. If thou dost not value them or dost not observe them, thou wilt never see God's bright sky or the shining day again. I only want to say this: Here is a golden rod; strike the wall of the enchanted castle with it three times. Straightway a door will open before thee. In the very middle of the garden thou wilt find the world-beautifully sounding tree. Go around it three times and then hurry like a shot arrow, with the speed of a dog, or the stone wall will close, and thou wilt remain inside; and if thou art once shut in, God have mercy and pity on thee, for that instant thou wilt be turned to stone. This is my word and speech; if thou cling to it, thou wilt be lucky; if not, thou wilt be wretched forever."

The boy took the golden rod and struck the side of the enchanted castle with it. That instant the door opened before him. The king's son did not inquire much whether he might enter or not; in a moment he ran in through the door and straight to the garden. Every kind of singing and dancing maidens came to meet him, -- some with citharas and harps; some played on cymbals and begged him to play and dance with them; some offered rich food and drink of every kind agreeable to the taste.

But the king's son had no mind to eat or drink; he pushed aside the maidens and ran to the very center of the garden, where the world-beautifully sounding tree was; then he went around it three times, turning toward the point whence he had come. That done he rushed from the garden, and a thousand times lucky was he. It was not the same for him to be a few minutes later, for the door closed and bit off the heel of his boot; but he did not care much about the heel of his boot. He ran home on the same road over which he had come; and when he arrived, the world-beautifully sounding tree was in the middle of the flowery garden.

Hitherto the flowery garden had been in good fame, but now the fame was seven times greater, so that people came from seven worlds to look at the tree; and the report of it reached the king himself, who determined in his mind if he had not seen it yet he would now at least go to see it.

As soon as the old witch divined his thought she put a powder in his coffee so that he became sick, and was not able to leave the room; then she stood before him without invitation, and said, "High king, as thy Highness is sick, I will go to see if the world- sounding tree is as beautiful as reported, and will soon bring back word."

The king in one way or another agreed to the old witch's proposal, and let her go to see the world-beautifully sounding tree. She had barely put foot in the flowery garden when the two children ran out to her to hear what the old woman would say this time.

"Beautiful children," said she, "beautiful is the garden of itself, beautiful is the sounding tree, but still seven times more beautiful would it be if the world-sweetly speaking bird were to sing upon it."

"What must I do?" asked the little boy.

"Nothing else," answered the old witch, "than this: In such and such a place is an enchanted castle, and thence it would be necessary to bring the world-sweetly speaking bird."

Then she went back; and from that hour the king's son could not remain at home, but planned to go for the world-sweetly speaking bird. Therefore, parting with his sister amidst bitter tear-shedding, he started through the kingdom and the world to bring home the sweetly speaking bird; but he enjoined on his sister that if the third day he were not at home, she should set out to seek him over a certain road, -- and with that the king's son went his way.

He journeyed and traveled across forty-nine kingdoms to the first enchanted castle, where there stood on guard a big hairy devil, who had a terribly large whip in his hand, to kill, without pity or mercy, every man going up or down.

Now, the hairy devil attacked Yanoshka sharply and roughly, thus, "Who art thou?"

"I, my lord elder brother."

"Who art thou?" asked the devil again.

"I."

"Art thou Yanoshka?"

"I am."

"Why art thou here in this strange land, where even a bird does not go?"

"I am going for the world-sweetly speaking bird. Hast thou heard of it, my lord elder brother?"

"What is the use in delay or denial? I have not indeed heard. But over there lives my elder brother; if he knows nothing of it, then no one in the world knows."

Now the king's son came to the second enchanted castle; the second devil sent him to his eldest brother, the big lame devil.

When Yanoshka came to the third castle, the devil asked, "Why art thou here in this strange land, where even a bird does not go?"

"I am looking for the world-sweetly speaking bird. Hast thou not heard of it, lord elder brother, in thy world-beautiful life?"

"Of course I have; it is here in this enchanted castle. Thou mayest take it away if thou wilt listen to my word; if not, better thou hadst never been born. For if thou wilt not observe my words, thou wilt never see God's bright sun again. I only wish to say: Here is a golden rod; take it, and with it strike the wall of the enchanted castle three times. Straightway the door will open before thee; pass in, run to the end of the glass corridor and across eight chambers. In the ninth chamber is the world-sweetly speaking bird in a rusty cage. Thou wilt find there every kind of beautiful and more beautiful golden birds, but look not at them, listen not to them, take no one of them, but take the sweetly speaking bird sitting sadly in the rusty cage. Snatch the cage in an instant, and rush from the enchanted castle as if thou hadst been shot from a cannon."

The king's son took the golden rod and struck the wall of the enchanted castle with it three times, and in a twinkle the door opened before him. The king's son then asked few questions. Whether it was permitted or not he ran into the room in an instant. While he was running to the end of the glass corridor he was called by name, from the right to the left, to stop. It is true that he was frightened, but he paid no heed. He ran straight to the first chamber. Every kind of flowers, more and more beautiful, were in golden pots; but the king's son did not touch them. He ran to the second chamber. In that were all kinds of swords and guns, but he did not choose from them. He entered the third, fourth, fifth, and in this way till he came to the ninth chamber. The ninth chamber, as the devil had told him, was full of all kinds of golden and silver cages, and in them golden-feathered birds, more and more beautiful, were singing; but the world-sweetly speaking bird was drooping there sadly in a rusty cage, and was not singing.

As the world-sweetly speaking bird was not golden-feathered like the others, it did not please the king's son, and he did not take it, but chose from among the many golden-feathered birds the prettiest, and wished to take that; but as he reached towards it, suddenly, in the twinkle of an eye, he was turned to stone, and the door of the stone wall closed before him.

Now, the little princess every God-given day spread the table for her good brother, but he did not come. Every God-given evening she went out before the house and waited till nearly midnight; then she spread the bed for him, but he did not lie in it. So the first day passed, and the second, and the third, -- day after day, but still the dear brother came not; therefore the princess, crying and weeping, went out to look for her brother.

She journeyed and traveled upon his trail till she came to the first enchanted castle, and the second, and at last the third.

The devil there stood on guard, with a great whip like a chain, so as to strike on the head, without pity or mercy, everyone going up or down; and he shouted angrily at the little girl, " Who art thou? "

"I."

"Thou art Marishka?" For meanwhile, let it be said, this was the name of the king's son's sister.

"I am."

"Why art thou traveling in this strange land, where not even a bird goes?"

"I am looking for my brother. Hast thou not heard of him, lord elder brother?"

"Of course I have heard, -- of course! He is in this enchanted castle, turned into stone; he had to be, for he would not obey me. Thou wilt go that way, too, if thou wilt not hold to my word."

Now the little girl took the golden rod from the devil, who told her what to do with it, and struck the wall of the enchanted castle with it three times. The door opened before her in a twinkle, the princess ran in; but she looked neither to the right nor the left. She ran straight to the ninth chamber; there she took the rusty cage, struck her brother three times on the side with the rod, then ran as if shot from a cannon. And a thousand-fold was her luck that she did not delay an eye-twinkle longer, for the stone-wall door, as it was, cut the edge of her skirt off when it closed. The princess had barely come out of the enchanted castle when she heard behind her frightful thundering, hammering and blowing, swearing and cursing, with threats.

They shouted after her, "Wait, thou! This-and-that-kind-of-wretch, it will soon be bitter for thee!"

But she did not turn to them; she ran like a hunted deer till she reached home. Who was waiting for her there? No one else but her dear brother.

The brother and sister then put up the sweetly speaking bird on the world-beautifully sounding tree, and the sweetly speaking bird spoke, sang more sweetly than any cithara, so that whoever heard it became ten years younger.

If the flowery garden had been famous before, it now stood in seven times greater fame, so that from seven kingdoms the people came to look at it; and the king, hearing of the fair fame of the flowery garden, resolved in his mind that, though he had not gone yet, he would go to see it now. The old witch barely divined this intention of the king when she gave him powders in black coffee, from which the king became so sick that this time, too, his visit to the beautiful garden came to nothing.

And then the old woman, without invitation, stood before him, and said, "High king, thou hast such a great desire to see the flowery garden, I will go at once, and bring back word if its beauty is as great as its fame."

The king agreed, and the old woman went to see the flowery garden. She had barely put foot in it when the two children ran out to meet her, received her very cordially, and did not know where to seat her.

"Beautiful children," began the old sinner, "the marble palace is beautiful, the flowery garden is beautiful, the world-sweetly speaking bird is beautiful; but the flowery garden would be still more beautiful if the silver lake were flowing in it, and in the lake golden fish were playing."

"What must I do to get the lake?" asked the king's son.

"Only this," answered the old skeleton.

"In a certain place, in an enchanted castle, is the world-silver lake, and in it the world-golden fish; it is only necessary to go for the silver lake, for the golden fish will come in it. All that is needed is to bring the lake."

Then the old woman took leave of the pair pleasantly, and went home. But the king's son from that day had no rest, so he took leave of his dear sister, and went out into the world for the silver lake. He traveled and journeyed across forty-nine kingdoms, and the Operentsia Sea, till he came to the first enchanted castle.

A devil was guarding there, who sent him to his elder brother, and he to his eldest.

The king's son arrived at the third enchanted palace. A devil stood guard there, with an enormous knotty club, to hit every man going up or down, without mercy or pity.

"God give thee good evening, my lord elder brother."

"God receive thee, Yanoshka; whither art thou faring in this strange land, where not even a bird goes?"

"I am looking for the world-silver lake. Hast thou not heard of it, lord elder brother?"

"Of course I have heard, -- of course; it is here in this enchanted castle. But, my younger brother, thou wilt have to tie up thy drawers well if 't is thy wish to take that away; for if thou dost not obey my word, I tell thee, on my true soul, that thou wilt reach Pilate by supper-time. I wish to say this: Here is a golden rod; strike the side of the enchanted palace with it, and suddenly the door will open before thee, run in straight to the garden. Thou wilt hear thy name called, but listen not. Every kind of beautiful maiden will come before thee, offering meat and drink; but eat not, neither drink. Thou wilt find on the way every kind of rich thing, -- gold, silver, diamonds, -- but touch nothing. Then every kind of disgusting snake and toad will come out, but be not afraid; run straight to the silver lake, which flows in the garden, run around it three times towards home, and then run out as thou didst go in"

Well, the king's son took the golden rod, struck the side of the enchanted castle three times, and the door opened before him; scarcely had he put foot inside when maidens called him by name. "This way, this way, Yanoshka! Eat, drink, with relish, Yanoshka! This way, Yanoshka, my embracing two arms are open to thee, run no farther!"

The king's son, as if deaf, did not listen, but ran farther. Then maidens more and more beautiful came before him. Some sprang at him, dangled their golden hair in his face; the king's son did not stop, but struck at them rudely, rushing on. He had barely left the maidens when he fell on to piles of treasure thrown in his way: beaten gold was piled high, and milk-white silver coin, -- here every kind of diamond ring, there swords set in diamonds; but the king's son touched nothing, and ran on. Then every kind of crawling, creeping thing swarmed around him, -- here hissing snakes, there warty toads. Yanoshka looked not under his feet, but ran till he came to the silver lake, around which he rushed three times, and went out as he had come. A thousand-fold was his fortune, for had he been an instant later the stone wall would have closed before him; as it was it took the heel off his boot, but he cared nothing for that. He left his boots there and ran home barefoot; when he reached home the silver lake was already flowing through the flowery garden, and in it all kinds of precious golden fish were jumping.

Hitherto the marble palace and the flowery garden with the sounding tree and the sweetly speaking bird had been in fair fame, but now, when the silver lake was flowing through the garden, and golden fish playing in it, now I say their fame spoke to the seven worlds, and people came to look at them. When this reached the ears of the king he resolved that he would neither eat nor drink till he saw the marble palace with all its wonders. Though the old witch offered him black coffee repeatedly, the king did not take it; but sitting in the golden carriage with his wife, he drove to see the flowery garden.

Scarcely had the king and queen entered the flowery garden when the brother and sister ran out before them, panting, and kissed their hands.

"Oh, father, this little girl is like thee!" cried the queen; "She is thy carved second!"

"And the little boy looks like thee," answered the king.

Well, the king and the queen went around the garden in order, and they could not do justice to its beauty; when they saw the sounding tree and the sweetly speaking bird, they clapped their hands. The boy went up in a moment on the sounding tree, plucked from it a couple of golden apples, gave one to the king and the other to the queen, who could not praise sufficiently his kindness. Then the king and queen looked at the silver lake and the golden fish in it; they visited the marble palace, and went from chamber to chamber till they had gone through seven in order.

The king and queen were unable to praise sufficiently the beauty of the rooms; but when they came to the most beautiful of all, the king found this to say, speaking speech, " Well, my little servant, wilt thou not answer a question of mine?"

"And what is it?" asked the prince.

"I should like to know why that picture is covered with velvet, and what it depicts."

One word is not much, but the king's little son did not say that much; speechless he drew the velvet covering aside. The king and queen were amazed, and knew their own children, whom they had never seen before. One embraced one of them, and the other the other; they could not speak, but they wept and laughed, and then the world-sounding tree and the sweetly speaking bird were heard.

Great was the rejoicing of every kind, but sad grew the old sinner when the king seized her, made her fast to a tree, and piled up beneath her a fire of sulfur.

- Source: Jeremiah Curtin, *Myths and Folk-Tales of the Russians, Western Slavs, and Magyars* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1903), pp. 517-545.
- Return to the table of contents.
- The long episode following the hedgehog's transformation and marriage is a variant of a type 707 folktale.

The Enchanted Pig

Romania

Once upon a time there lived a king who had three daughters. Now it happened that he had to go out to battle, so he called his daughters and said to them, "My dear children, I am obliged to go to the wars. The enemy is approaching us with a large army. It is a great grief to me to leave you all. During my absence take care of yourselves and be good girls; behave well and look after everything in the house. You may walk in the garden, and you may go into all the rooms in the palace, except the room at the back in the right-hand corner; into that you must not enter, for harm would befall you."

"You may keep your mind easy, father," they replied. "We have never been disobedient to you. Go in peace, and may heaven give you a glorious victory!"

When everything was ready for his departure, the king gave them the keys of all the rooms and reminded them once more of what he had said. His daughters kissed his hands with tears in their eyes, and wished him prosperity, and he gave the eldest the keys.

Now when the girls found themselves alone they felt so sad and dull that they did not know what to do. So, to pass the time, they decided to work for part of the day, to read for part of the day, and to enjoy themselves in the garden for part of the day. As long as they did this all went well with them. But this happy state of things did not last long. Every day they grew more and more curious, and you will see what the end of that was.

"Sisters," said the eldest princess, "all day long we sew, spin, and read. We have been several days quite alone, and there is no corner of the garden that we have not explored. We have been in all the rooms of our father's palace, and have admired the rich and beautiful furniture; why should not we go into the room that our father forbad us to enter?"

"Sister," said the youngest, "I cannot think how you can tempt us to break our father's command. When he told us not to go into that room he must have known what he was saying, and have had a good reason for saying it."

"Surely the sky won't fall about our heads if we *do* go in," said the second princess. "Dragons and such like monsters that would devour us will not be hidden in the room. And how will our father ever find out that we have gone in?"

While they were speaking thus, encouraging each other, they had reached the room; the eldest fitted the key into the lock, and snap! the door stood open.

The three girls entered, and what do you think they saw?

The room was quite empty, and without any ornament, but in the middle stood a large table, with a gorgeous cloth, and on it lay a big open book.

Now the princesses were curious to know what was written in the book, especially the eldest, and this is what she read, "The eldest daughter of this king will marry a prince from the East."

Then the second girl stepped forward, and turning over the page she read, "The second daughter of this king will marry a prince from the West."

The girls were delighted, and laughed and teased each other.

But the youngest princess did not want to go near the table or to open the book. Her elder sisters however left her no peace, and will she, nill she, they dragged her up to the table, and in fear and trembling she turned over the page and read, "The youngest daughter of this king will be married to a pig from the North."

Now if a thunderbolt had fallen upon her from heaven it would not have frightened her more.

She almost died of misery, and if her sisters had not held her up, she would have sunk to the ground and cut her head open.

When she came out of the fainting fit into which she had fallen in her terror, her sisters tried to comfort her, saying, "How can you believe such nonsense? When did it ever happen that a king's daughter married a pig?"

"What a baby you are!" said the other sister; "has not our father enough soldiers to protect you, even if the disgusting creature did come to woo you?"

The youngest princess would fain have let herself be convinced by her sisters' words, and have believed what they said, but her heart was heavy. Her thoughts kept turning to the book, in which stood written that great happiness waited her sisters, but that a fate was in store for her such as had never before been known in the world.

Besides, the thought weighed on her heart that she had been guilty of disobeying her father. She began to get quite ill, and in a few days she was so changed that it was difficult to recognize her; formerly she had been rosy and merry, now she was pale and nothing gave her any pleasure. She gave up playing with her sisters in the garden, ceased to gather flowers to put in her hair, and never sang when they sat together at their spinning and sewing.

In the meantime the king won a great victory, and having completely defeated and driven off the enemy, he hurried home to his daughters, to whom his thoughts had constantly turned. Everyone went out to meet him with cymbals and fifes and drums, and there was great rejoicing over his victorious return. The king's first act on reaching home was to thank Heaven for the victory he had gained over the enemies who had risen against him. He then entered his palace, and the three princesses stepped forward to meet him. His joy was great when he saw that they were all well, for the youngest did her best not to appear sad.

In spite of this, however, it was not long before the king noticed that his third daughter was getting very thin and sad looking. And all of a sudden he felt as if a hot iron were entering his soul, for it flashed through his mind that she had disobeyed his word. He felt sure he was right; but to be quite certain he called his daughters to him, questioned them, and ordered them to speak the truth. They confessed everything, but took good care not to say which had led the other two into temptation.

The king was so distressed when he heard it that he was almost overcome by grief. But he took heart and tried to comfort his daughters, who looked frightened to death. He saw that what had happened had happened, and that a thousand words would not alter matters by a hair's breadth.

Well, these events had almost been forgotten when one fine day a prince from the East appeared at the court and asked the king for the hand of his eldest daughter. The king gladly gave his consent. A great wedding banquet was prepared, and after three days of feasting the happy pair were accompanied to the frontier with much ceremony and rejoicing.

After some time the same thing befell the second daughter, who was wooed and won by a prince from the West.

Now when the young princess saw that everything fell out exactly as had been written in the book, she grew very sad. She refused to eat, and would not put on her fine clothes nor go out walking, and declared that she would rather die than become a laughing-stock to the world. But the king would not allow her to do anything so wrong, and he comforted her in all possible ways.

So the time passed, till lo and behold! one fine day an enormous pig from the North walked into the palace, and going straight up to the king said, "Hail! oh king. May your life be as prosperous and bright as sunrise on a clear day!"

"I am glad to see you well, friend," answered the king, "but what wind has brought you hither?"

"I come a wooing," replied the pig.

Now the king was astonished to hear so fine a speech from a pig, and at once it occurred to him that something strange was the matter. He would gladly have turned the pig's thoughts in another direction, as he did not wish to give him the princess for a wife; but when he heard that the court and the whole street were full of all the pigs in the world he saw that there was no escape, and that he must give his consent. The pig was not satisfied with mere promises, but insisted that the wedding should take place within a week, and would not go away till the king had sworn a royal oath upon it.

The king then sent for his daughter, and advised her to submit to fate, as there was nothing else to be done. And he added, "My child, the words and whole behavior of this pig are quite unlike those of other pigs. I do not myself believe that he always was a pig. Depend upon it some magic or witchcraft has been at work. Obey him, and do everything that he wishes, and I feel sure that Heaven will shortly send you release."

"If you wish me to do this, dear father, I will do it," replied the girl.

In the meantime the wedding day drew near. After the marriage, the pig and his bride set out for his home in one of the royal carriages. On the way they passed a great bog, and the pig ordered the carriage to stop, and got out and rolled about in the mire till he was covered with mud from head to foot; then he got back into the carriage and told his wife to kiss him. What was the poor girl to do? She bethought herself of her father's words, and, pulling out her pocket handkerchief, she gently wiped the pig's snout and kissed it.

By the time they reached the pig's dwelling, which stood in a thick wood, it was quite dark. They sat down quietly for a little, as they were tired after their drive; then they had supper together, and lay down to rest. During the night the princess noticed that the pig had changed into a man. She was not a little surprised, but remembering her father's words, she took courage, determined to wait and see what would happen.

And now she noticed that every night the pig became a man, and every morning he was changed into a pig before she awoke. This happened several nights running, and the princess could not understand it at all. Clearly her husband must be bewitched. In time she grew quite fond of him, he was so kind and gentle.

One fine day as she was sitting alone she saw an old witch go past. She felt quite excited, as it was so long since she had seen a human being, and she called out to the old woman to come and talk to her. Among other things the witch told her that she understood all magic arts, and that she could foretell the future, and knew the healing powers of herbs and plants.

"I shall be grateful to you all my life, old dame," said the princess, "if you will tell me what is the matter with my husband. Why is he a pig by day and a human being by night?"

"I was just going to tell you that one thing, my dear, to show you what a good fortuneteller I am. If you like, I will give you a herb to break the spell."

"If you will only give it to me," said the princess, "I will give you anything you choose to ask for, for I cannot bear to see him in this state."

"Here, then, my dear child," said the witch, "take this thread, but do not let him know about it, for if he did it would lose its healing power. At night, when he is asleep, you must get up very quietly, and fasten the thread round his left foot as firmly as possible; and you will see in the morning he will not have changed back into a pig, but will still be a man. I do not want any reward. I shall be sufficiently repaid by knowing that you are happy. It almost breaks my heart to think of all you have suffered, and I only wish I had known it sooner, as I should have come to your rescue at once."

When the old witch had gone away the princess hid the thread very carefully, and at night she got up quietly, and with a beating heart she bound the thread round her husband's foot. Just as she was pulling the knot tight there was a crack, and the thread broke, for it was rotten.

Her husband awoke with a start, and said to her, "Unhappy woman, what have you done? Three days more and this unholy spell would have fallen from me, and now, who knows how long I may have to go about in this disgusting shape? I must leave you at once, and we shall not meet again until you have worn out three pairs of iron shoes and blunted a steel staff in your search for me." So saying he disappeared.

Now, when the princess was left alone she began to weep and moan in a way that was pitiful to hear; but when she saw that her tears and groans did her no good, she got up, determined to go wherever fate should lead her.

On reaching a town, the first thing she did was to order three pairs of iron sandals and a steel staff, and having made these preparations for her journey, she set out in search of her husband. On and on she wandered over nine seas and across nine continents; through forests with trees whose stems were as thick as beer barrels; stumbling and knocking herself against the fallen branches, then picking herself up and going on; the boughs of the trees hit her face, and the shrubs tore her hands, but on she went, and never looked back. At last, wearied with her long journey and worn out and overcome with sorrow, but still with hope at her heart, she reached a house.

Now who do you think lived there? The moon.

The princess knocked at the door, and begged to be let in that she might rest a little. The mother of the moon, when she saw her sad plight, felt a great pity for her, and took her in and nursed and tended her. And while she was here the princess had a little baby.

One day the mother of the moon asked her, "How was it possible for you, a mortal, to get hither to the house of the moon?"

Then the poor princess told her all that happened to her, and added "I shall always be thankful to Heaven for leading me hither, and grateful to you that you took pity on me and on my baby, and did not leave us to die. Now I beg one last favor of you; can your daughter, the moon, tell me where my husband is?"

"She cannot tell you that, my child," replied the goddess, "but, if you will travel towards the East until you reach the dwelling of the sun, he may be able to tell you something."

Then she gave the princess a roast chicken to eat, and warned her to be very careful not to lose any of the bones, because they might be of great use to her.

When the princess had thanked her once more for her hospitality and for her good advice, and had thrown away one pair of shoes that were worn out, and had put on a second pair, she tied up the chicken bones in a bundle, and taking her baby in her arms and her staff in her hand, she set out once more on her wanderings.

On and on and on she went across bare sandy deserts, where the roads were so heavy that for every two steps that she took forwards she fell back one; but she struggled on till she had passed these dreary plains; next she crossed high rocky mountains, jumping from crag to crag and from peak to peak. Sometimes she would rest for a little on a mountain, and then start afresh always farther and farther on. She had to cross swamps and to scale mountain peaks covered with flints, so that her feet and knees and elbows were all torn and bleeding, and sometimes she came to a precipice across which she could not jump, and she had to crawl round on hands and knees, helping herself along with her staff.

At length, wearied to death, she reached the palace in which the sun lived. She knocked and begged for admission. The mother of the sun opened the door, and was astonished at beholding a mortal from the distant earthly shores, and wept with pity when she heard of all she had suffered. Then, having promised to ask her son about the princess's husband, she hid her in the cellar, so that the sun might notice nothing on his return home, for he was always in a bad temper when he came in at night.

The next day the princess feared that things would not go well with her, for the sun had noticed that some one from the other world had been in the palace. But his mother had soothed him with soft words, assuring him that this was not so. So the princess took heart when she saw how kindly she was treated, and asked, "But how in the world is it possible for the sun to be angry? He is so beautiful and so good to mortals."

"This is how it happens," replied the sun's mother. "In the morning when he stands at the gates of paradise he is happy, and smiles on the whole world, but during the day he gets cross, because he sees all the evil deeds of men, and that is why his heat becomes so scorching; but in the evening he is both sad and angry, for he stands at the gates of death; that is his usual course. From there he comes back here."

She then told the princess that she had asked about her husband, but that her son had replied that he knew nothing about him, and that her only hope was to go and inquire of the wind.

Before the princess left the mother of the sun gave her a roast chicken to eat, and advised her to take great care of the bones, which she did, wrapping them up in a bundle. She then threw away her second pair of shoes, which were quite worn out, and with her child on her arm and her staff in her hand, she set forth on her way to the wind.

In these wanderings she met with even greater difficulties than before, for she came upon one mountain of flints after another, out of which tongues of fire would flame up; she passed through woods which had never been trodden by human foot, and had to cross fields of ice and avalanches of snow. The poor woman nearly died of these hardships, but she kept a brave heart, and at length she reached an enormous cave in the side of a mountain. This was where the wind lived. There was a little door in the railing in front of the cave, and here the princess knocked and begged for admission. The mother of the wind had pity on her and took her in, that she might rest a little. Here too she was hidden away, so that the wind might not notice her.

The next morning the mother of the wind told her that her husband was living in a thick wood, so thick that no axe had been able to cut a way through it; here he had built himself a sort of house by placing trunks of trees together and fastening them with withes and here he lived alone, shunning human kind.

After the mother of the wind had given the princess a chicken to eat, and had warned her to take care of the bones, she advised her to go by the Milky Way, which at night lies across the sky, and to wander on till she reached her goal.

Having thanked the old woman with tears in her eyes for her hospitality, and for the good news she had given her, the princess set out on her journey and rested neither night nor day, so great was her longing to see her husband again. On and on she walked until her last pair of shoes fell in pieces. So she threw them away and went on with bare feet, not heeding the bogs nor the thorns that wounded her, nor the stones that bruised her. At last she reached a beautiful green meadow on the edge of a wood. Her heart was cheered by the sight of the flowers and the soft cool grass, and she sat down and rested for a little. But hearing the birds chirping to their mates among the trees made her think with longing of her husband, and she wept bitterly, and taking her child in her arms, and her bundle of chicken bones on her shoulder, she entered the wood.

For three days and three nights she struggled through it, but could find nothing. She was quite worn out with weariness and hunger, and even her staff was no further help to her, for in her many wanderings it had become quite blunted. She almost gave up in despair, but made one last great effort, and suddenly in a thicket she came upon the sort of house that the mother of the wind had described. It had no windows, and the door was up in the roof. Round the house she went, in search of steps, but could find none. What was she to do? How was she to get in? She thought and thought, and tried in vain to climb up to the door. Then suddenly she bethought her of the chicken bones that she had dragged all that weary way, and she said to herself, "They would not all have told me to take such good care of these bones if they had not had some good reason for doing so. Perhaps now, in my hour of need, they may be of use to me."

So she took the bones out of her bundle, and having thought for a moment, she placed the two ends together. To her surprise they stuck tight; then she added the other bones, till she had two long poles the height of the house; these she placed against the wall, at a distance of a yard from one another. Across them she placed the other bones, piece by piece, like the steps of a ladder. As soon as one step was finished she stood upon it and made the next one, and then the next, till she was close to the door. But just as she got near the top she noticed that there were no bones left for the last rung of the ladder. What was she to do? Without that last step the whole ladder was useless. She must have lost one of the bones. Then suddenly an idea came to her. Taking a knife she chopped off her little finger, and placing it on the last step, it stuck as the bones had done. The ladder was complete, and with her child on her arm she entered the door of the house. Here she found everything in perfect order. Having taken some food, she laid the child down to sleep in a trough that was on the floor, and sat down herself to rest.

When her husband, the pig, came back to his house, he was startled by what he saw. At first he could not believe his eyes, and stared at the ladder of bones, and at the little finger on the top of it. He felt that some fresh magic must be at work, and in his terror he almost turned away from the house; but then a better idea came to him, and he changed himself into a dove, so that no witchcraft could have power over him, and flew into the room without touching the ladder. Here he found a woman rocking a child. At the sight of her, looking so changed by all that she had suffered for his sake, his heart was moved by such love and longing and by so great a pity that he suddenly became a man.

The princess stood up when she saw him. and her heart beat with fear, for she did not know him. But when he had told her who he was, in her great joy she forgot all her sufferings, and they seemed as nothing to her. He was a very handsome man, as straight as a fir tree. They sat down together and she told him all her adventures, and he wept with pity at the tale. And then he told her his own history.

"I am a king's son. Once when my father was fighting against some dragons, who were the scourge of our country, I slew the youngest dragon. His mother, who was a witch, cast a spell over me and changed me into a pig. It was she who in the disguise of an old woman gave you the thread to bind round my foot. So that instead of the three days that had to run before the spell was broken, I was forced to remain a pig for three more years. Now that we have suffered for each other, and have found each other again, let us forget the past."

And in their joy they kissed one another.

Next morning they set out early to return to his father's kingdom. Great was the rejoicing of all the people when they saw him and his wife; his father and his mother embraced them both, and there was feasting in the palace for three days and three nights.

Then they set out to see her father. The old king nearly went out of his mind with joy at beholding his daughter again. When she had told him all her adventures, he said to her, "Did not I tell you that I was quite sure that that creature who wooed and won you as his wife had not been born a pig? You see, my child, how wise you were in doing what I told you."

And as the king was old and had no heirs, he put them on the throne in his place. And they ruled as only kings rule who have suffered many things. And if they are not dead they are still living and ruling happily.

- Source: Andrew Lang, *The Red Fairy Book* (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1895), pp. 104-115.
- The second half of this tale belongs to type 425 (The Search for the Lost Husband).
- Link to another translation of this tale: Ignácz Kúnos, "The Enchanted Hog," *Turkish [and Romanian] Fairy Tales and Folk Tales*, translated from the Hungarian version by R. Nisbet Bain (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1896), pp. 222-43.
- Lang's source: Mite Kremnitz, *Rumänische Märchen* (Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Friedrich, 1882), no. 5, pp. 48-66.
- Return to the table of contents.

Links to related sites

1. A file containing only the Grimms' Hans-My-Hedgehog.
2. Another group of animal bridegroom stories: Frog Kings: Folktales about Slimy Suitors.
3. The following "Monkey Bridegroom" tale bears a strong resemblance to the Grimms' "Hans-My-Hedgehog": Juan Wearing a Monkey's Skin (Philippines).
4. Grimm Brothers Home Page.

Return to D. L. Ashliman's **folktexts**, a library of folktales, folklore, fairy tales, and mythology.

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